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Minutes, Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee Meeting, Tuesday, February 26, 2013

Arts & Sciences Academic Affairs Committee

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Academic Affairs Committee

Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2013

Opening:

The regular meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee was called to order at 12:34 pm on February 26, 2013 in the MLS Classroom CSS 167 by Claire Strom.

Present:

Claire Strom, Susan Walsh, Pedro Bernal, Martina Vivodic, Wenxian Zhang, Nancy Decker, Faithe Galloway (student rep), Jennifer Nilson (student rep), David Daubert (student rep)

Visitors: Paul Reich, Ed Royce, Jennifer Cavanaugh, Holly Pohlig

A. American Studies Major and Minor - Approved

This is an interdisciplinary major in A&S. Multiple disciplines from all four divisions of the college and a number of faculty are involved. American Studies examines American culture and society, and how America's idea of exceptionalism fits in globally. There are five major themes. Students in major and minor hone critical thinking and writing skills. There are four core departments: English, history, political science, and sociology. Other departments house electives. All majors and minors start with Intro to American Studies course. It is a theme-based course (ie Hollywood, citizenship, the frontier) and will introduce students to texts from a number of different genres. From the start, they begin interdisciplinary thinking and critical thinking and writing skills that would be applicable across disciplines. For the major, there are two core courses, then 2 electives at low level, 4 elective classes at upper level, and a project-based, team-taught senior seminar. The minor has 6 classes: Intro, 4 electives from 4 different departments, and 1 additional elective. This program has a lot of student choice to appeal to students. It should appeal to students who are not wedded to a single discipline and international students. Paul Reich will teach the Intro class and serve as the director of the program. Martina asked if is this likely to be a single major or a double major. Ed replied that this will probably be a double major for many students. Wenxian asked how many students might be in the program. Paul said he doesn't know. Wenxian asked how many new courses are generated. Paul replied that all but two (Intro, Senior Seminar) are already in existence and regularly offered. Susan asked about programs at peer and aspirant institutions. Paul replied that Richmond and Swanee have these kinds of majors, sometimes in centers of interdisciplinary studies. Nancy that with the major outlined as it is, programs like Fulbright foreign language teaching assistantship might like it. These students must take a course in American studies, and now we have a list. Claire asked how were the courses selected. Ed said he called faculty, had a meeting, explained the logic of the major

and got list of courses. The faculty teaching the classes gave assurances that each course deals with at least one of the themes mentioned so that we can get valuable artifacts to address theme. Wenxian asked if this program would require new faculty line or a department. Paul said probably not; he does not expect this to cost the college much because the courses already exist. Claire suggested this program is comparable to IR. Nancy asked why isn't environmental studies a core course. Claire said that ES does not have a lot of low-level courses that might work. Ed said that Barry Allen is also talking about changing his RCC to fit. There is room for additional courses to come. Martina asked if students major in this, because there is so much diversity, will they meet the requirements? What are the expected outcomes given this variety? Paul said any course that deals with America will have to deal with these themes. Martina asked if we can ensure that students are interdisciplinary. Paul said yes, because courses must come from different departments; at most, only 3 classes can be from a single department. In that way, each person would be interdisciplinary. Jana asked if prereqs on upper division courses would cause a problem if a student wants to take these. Paul replied that prereqs are not waived uniformly, but could be waived by instructor consent. Ed stated that the core courses do not have prereqs. Jana suggested that though a course may not have prereq, in order to engage at that high level, students might have hard work to catch up without the prereq. Paul suggested this is an advising discussion with students to make sure that students have the disciplinary methodology to successfully achieve in these upper level courses. Jana suggested this major not for the faint of heart and is quite focused and challenging. Claire said it models the IR major, but there is a significant learning curve to jump disciplines, even though it is 50/50 lower and upper level classes. Jana said sometimes students think IR will be a vague, nebulous INB but find out that it is not easier. IR is 130 majors. Ed said it is also good to have students from diverse backgrounds because no prereqs to attract people from outside the discipline. This allows for different perspectives in the classroom. Pedro asked if the Intro course is in the fall of second year or spring of first year. Paul said the Intro course should appeal to a broad base to attract students to the major and would be offered the spring of first year to count as a general elective. Jana asked if the Intro will course get rotated. Paul said that right now, he will teach it, but maybe Julian Chambliss will in the future as well. Jana liked filtering humanities and arts through a single program. Wenxian asked if the major will be ready for the fall. Paul said in the spring if it gets through. Wenzian asked if it will go to Holt. Paul said for English this is easy, but other departments might not be as easy. There is already a humanities major in Holt.

B. Next week's agenda

- 1) Approve minutes of last two meetings
- 2) General Education Logistics—James/Jenny (3/12)
- 3) African American studies in Holt—Julian (3/19)
- 4) Courses requiring financial resources—approval process?—Jenny (April)
- 5) Student probationary status—Jenny (April)
- 6) Opening academic warnings earlier (April)
- 7) Team teaching—how it's counted—Bob (April)

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 pm by Claire Strom. The next general meeting will be at 12:30 pm March 12, 2013 in CSS 167.

Minutes submitted by

Susan Walsh

Approved by
